



# U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS BALTIMORE DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Corps ends attempt to use air-frame tent at Spring Valley Lot 18**

**BALTIMORE** – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, decided Monday to end attempts to set up and use an air-frame tent for its investigation of a debris field at Lot 18 in the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site located in northwestern Washington, D.C. The dig is currently being conducted under a blue 60- by 100-foot metal frame tent. The Corps had planned to move into the inflatable tent this month, but now work at the site will continue using the metal-frame tent.

The white inflatable tent, which consists of joined air cells, arrived at the site in July. Several attempts to erect it and repair it have been made by the Corps' project team and the manufacturer. Problems with critical seams have caused the tent to deflate. The air-frame tent will be removed from Lot 18.

"The air-inflatable tent would have been lighter in weight and more maneuverable," said Craig Georg, project manager. "Using such a tent would have been an innovative solution to some of the challenges of Lot 18 – more adaptable to critical tent locations where the terrain is uneven. But, worker safety and the tent's ability to protect the public in the event of an accident is our primary concern."

The work has been scheduled for completion in late January, 2006. The team is evaluating the decision's effects on that schedule.

"The tent was one element among several elements we are employing to increase productivity and speed the progress of the investigation," said Gary Schilling, the Corps' Spring Valley program manager.

"While the air-inflatable tent provided some time efficiencies that will not be realized, we are optimistic the investigation can stay on schedule, barring the discovery of particularly significant or complicated items to be removed," Schilling said. "Design changes that have increased efficiencies are working in our favor to help maintain the schedule." Those improvements include a larger excavator, a shaker table, a soil conveyor system and bulk roll-off containers.

Spring Valley is the site of chemical weapons research conducted by the government during World War I. As part of its environmental cleanup project there, the Corps is in the process of removing potentially contaminated items from a debris field, designated as Lot 18. Lot 18 is located near the southwestern edge of the American University campus and behind several Rockwood Parkway residential properties.